

Catherine Cookson (1906-1998) is quite rightly famous for her novels based on life in the industrial north-east of England. One such work, written in 1989, is called "The Fifteen Streets" - an intriguing title, but just how many 'Perfin' Streets can be found? The answer turns out to be not a lot!

As far as I can tell, street names in full are unknown on G.B. perfins, but a small number can be found using the abbreviated form "St". The first part of this article lists just four streets (the only ones I could find!) involving six separate companies and nine different dies. The four streets involved are,-

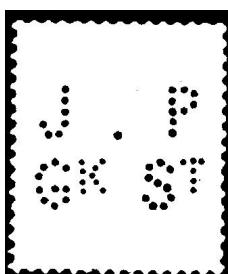
Greek Street - Regent Street - Oxford Street - Sussex Street

The Ordnance Survey map of London (surveyed in 1870, published 1875) shows the first three mentioned streets in a neat cluster in the 'Western' Postal district of London, whereas Sussex Street is in London WC.

All 9 dies are in a similar format most of which are known to be the work of ***Joseph Sloper & Co***, dating mainly to his 'monopoly' period 1868-1872.

Greek Street, London W.

1870-1877

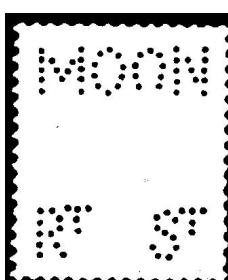


J6140.01

Believed to have been used by.
John Miles Pitman,
Gold & Silver Leaf Mfrs,
2 Greek St, Soho, London W.

Regent Street, London W.

1870-1871



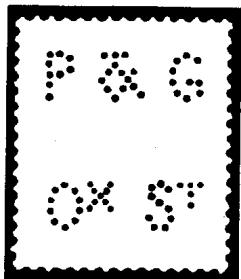
M4310.01

Thought to have been used by:
Mrs W Moon,
Ladies Outfitter,
164 Regent St, London W.

Oxford Street, London W. Three companies are represented, two of which were neighbours and had consecutively numbered machines.

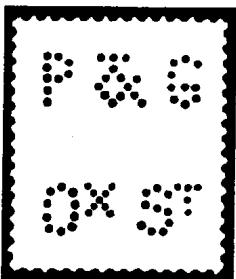
Parkins & Gotto ' Stationers & Booksellers, 24-28 Oxford St, London W.

1869-1900



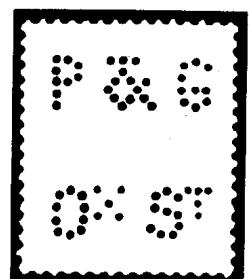
P2210.01

1900-1901



1900-1901

1901-1915

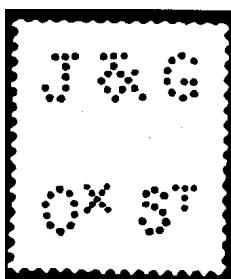


1901-1915

The first die is from an early Sloper machine No. 2701 completed in November 1869. The replacement die (cl 900) was also made by Slopers. The pins were removed from the 'x' cl901.

Jackson & Graham, Cabinet Makers, 30 Oxford St, London W.

1869-1881

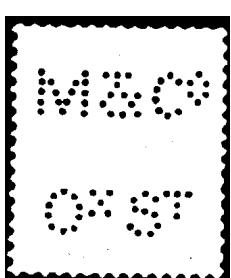


J3210.01

Another early Sloper machine No. 2702, completed September 1869.

User unknown.

1895-1930



M1670.01

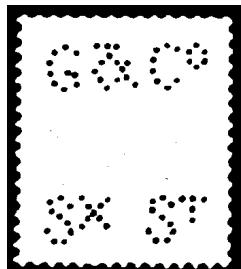
A little later than some of the preceding dies, but London W postmarks on surviving examples point to the street being Oxford Street.

Sussex Street London WC.

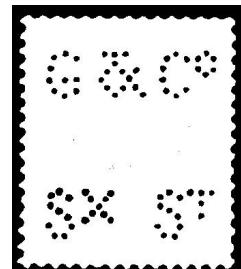
Two distinct settings are known, one with rows set wider apart than the other. Both dies are believed to have been used by:

Gwynne & Co, (*trade as yet unknown*), Sussex St, London WC.

c1869



1869-1878



<< Wide

Narrow >>

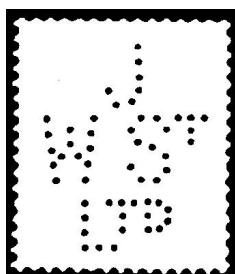
G1070.01a

G1070.01

Since researching this information for the Spring Meeting 2003 competitive display, another die using the 'St' abbreviation has been found.

Wood Street, London EC2.

1930-1940



J8680.01

Known to have been used by:

Jerrards (Wood St) Ltd,
Milliners & Haberdashers,
Wood St, London EC2.

But where does the 'Street Furniture' bit come into it? When the subject is stamps there can be only one answer - Post Boxes. Well., from the perfin point of view, not the boxes themselves but the firms who made them.

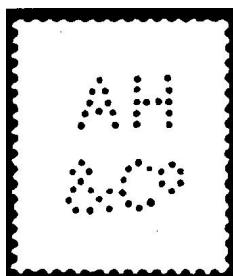
Although the introduction of the Uniform Penny Post took place in 1840, it wasn't until 1852/3 that posting boxes (painted green) were provided at the roadside. The now familiar red livery was not adopted until 1874. A few of the companies who have held major contracts to manufacture Pillar, Wall, and Lamp Letter Boxes for the G.P.O. include:

W T Allen & Co (London & Mansfield) ***The Carron Company (Falkirk)***
Cochrane, Grove & Co (Dudley) ***Andrew Handyside (Derby)***
and ***McDowall Steven & Co Ltd (Glasgow)***.

Andrew Handyside & Co Ltd, Britannia Foundry, Derby.

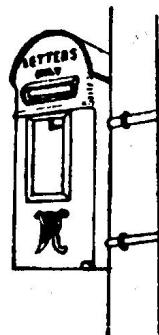
Handysides cast pillar-boxes for the G.P.O from 1853 to 1931.

1895-1915



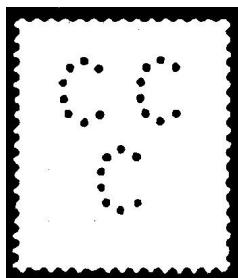
A2820.01 a

The first lamp letter-box was cast by Handysides and installed in Finchley in September 1896.



Carron Company, Mungal Foundry, Carron, near Falkirk - Established 1759

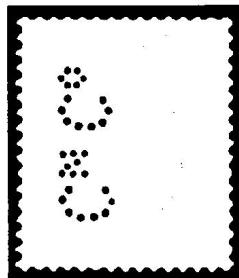
1912-1975



C1250.02M

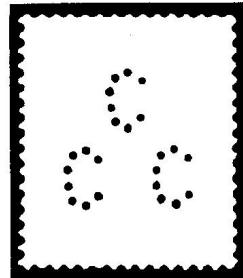
There is some debate as to whether the perfins should read "C/CC" or "CC/C". They are shown here as they appear in Tomkins 2000. The two dies below were used in their London Office.

1870-1905



C5290.01

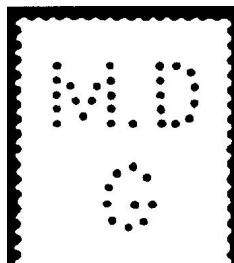
1905-1915



C1260.02

McDowall Steven & Co Ltd, Milton Ironworks, Glasgow.

1905-1939



M2090.01

If anyone knows of any other "Streets" that appear on G.B. perfins, or any more Post Box Manufacturers, I would be more than pleased to hear from you!